Exp 26/11

Application No.: ADC/0593/07 Recommendation – Refuse Application

Site: 121 Grinstead Lane, Lancing, West Sussex

Proposal: 2 x Two Bedroom Flats Attached to South Side with 3 Parking Spaces at Front.

The Application

The application site contains the southern half of a double storey semi-detached dwelling, with brick and white rendered walls and a hip ended clay tile roof, located on the eastern side of Grinstead Lane, within the built up area of Lancing.

The applicant is proposing a hip ended, two-storey 6.1m wide by 10.75m deep side extension on the southern side of the building, which will allow for the creation of a two bedroom flat on either level of the extended building. The extension protrudes some 4m to the rear of the existing dwelling, mirroring an extension that has occurred to the northern half of the attached pair.

Both flats will utilise a common entrance separate form the existing dwelling, the design of which has been altered to match the size of the entrances to the existing dwellings.

Three 4.8m deep by 2.4m wide single car bay spaces are identified within the front setback of the plot, each serviced by an independent crossover point onto the adjoining highway.

Amenity space has been divided to the rear of the extension, such that each flat has an area of around $50m^2$ dedicated for its exclusive use. The existing house will retain the garden directly behind their portion of the expanded building, being approximately $91m^2$.

A 1.2m x 1.6m bin enclosure is identified within the amenity space for both of the flats, with a further enclosure identified within the front setback for the existing dwelling.

This portion of Grinstead Lane is characterised by double storey semi-detached dwellings, a number of which have been extended to the side in a similar manner as proposed in this application. None appear to have been converted into flats or additional dwellings.

Consultations and Representations

Environment Agency: The Agency advise that the land is in an area which is known to be at risk from flooding, however they do not object to the proposal on the basis that there would be no exacerbation of flood risk as a consequence of the development. The Agency goes on to recommend that the applicant consider raising the floor level of the development by 300mm, undertake flood proofing measures and use flood resistance and resilience measures to reduce the potential impacts of any flooding.

County Transport Planning Services: Consistent with their comments on an application for an attached three bedroom home at No.131 Grinstead Lane, they object to the proposal on traffic safety grounds. Essentially they are concerned with:

- the proposed intensification of use of the site;
- the additional car parking requirement that would be generated by the development;
- the inadequate number of car parking spaces proposed;
- the lack of any on-site turning facility meaning that cars will need to back directly onto the highway; &
- the proximity of the proposed bays to a pedestrian crossing point.

Lancing Parish Council: The Parish Council have deferred their consideration of the proposal.

Third Parties: Two representations have been received from landowners abutting the rear and southern side boundaries of the application site. The owner of No.123 Grinstead Lane has raised concerns relating to:

- The proximity of the development to his side boundary;
- Overlooking issues associated with two first floor windows on the upstairs flat; &
- The form of the new entrance (which has been modified in the Amended Plan to match those on the existing building).

The owner of No.7 Abbots Way has expressed concerns with overlooking of their back garden by the rear living room windows of the first floor flat, which would be reduced via use of this portion of the dwelling as bedrooms as opposed to living space.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plans 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005):

LOC1, NE1, ERA1 & DEV1

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996):

AG1, AH2, AH5, AT12 & Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No. 2 'Space Around New Dwellings & Flats'

Planning Policy Guidance No.3 – 'Housing' (DETR 2000)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Planning Policy Guidance No.3 encourages maximising the use of urban land for housing development at higher densities (without rigid application of parking and amenity space standards), subject to emphasis being placed on the quality of design.

Structure Plan policies support the principle of PPG3 and give significant weight to making the best use of land through higher density development provided that the impact on the character of the area and environment is acceptable (LOC1, ERA1, CH1) and the development being of a high quality standard (DEV1).

Policy DEV4 states (amongst other things) that development should not be permitted unless the travel needs it generates are met. DEV5 states that "Development should not be permitted unless the level of parking is compatible with the need to avoid environmental or safety problems and the need to encourage walking, cycling and the use of passenger transport, where this is, or can be a realistic alternative".

Local Plan Policy AH2 relates to new residential development (by way of infilling and redevelopment) and states that new dwellings should be designed so that:

- Their appearance, character and scale create a pleasant place in which to live, and are in keeping with and enhance the existing local environment with particular attention being paid to architectural form, height, materials, density, layout of buildings and hardsurfaced areas;
- They respect existing natural features of the site including landform and trees;
- They do not have an unneighbourly effect on existing dwellings by reason of unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight / sunlight, outlook or open amenity space;
- They incorporate adequate standards of residential amenity for the new dwellings(s) in terms of open amenity space, daylight, outlook and privacy;
- Access and parking provision meet adopted standards; &
- They comply with Council's adopted development standards (in this instance Development Control Standard No.2 – 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats').

Visual Amenity, Character & Appearance

The appearance of the extension will largely mimic that of the other half of this semi-detached property, as well as a number of other dwellings along this stretch of Grinstead Lane. The proposal is therefore relatively sympathetic to the design the semi detached pair and the surrounding locality in general.

In terms of impact on the streetscene, the principal difference would be the creation of an additional doorway, slightly wider windows (to meet fire escape standards for flat development), and removal and replacement of the front wall and garden with three separate crossovers and a small bin storage enclosure. The visual aspect of these changes is not considered sufficient to warrant refusal to the application in this instance.

Residential Amenity – Privacy

Recognising that the kitchen and bathroom windows on the southern side elevation of the first floor flat would have the potential to overlook the rear patio and garden of No.123 Grinstead Lane, the applicant has modified the plans to identify the use of obscure glazing. These windows will also need to fixed to ensure no overlooking occurs, with exception to a small top hung opening that will need to be included to satisfy relevant Building Regulations.

A distance of approximately 40m exists between the proposed rear elevation living room windows and the rear elevation of No.7 Abbotts Way, substantially in excess of the 22m minimum distance required by Councils Development standard between principal facing rooms. Whilst some overlooking of adjacent gardens is inevitable, it is not considered a significant loss of privacy would occur as to warrant refusal of the application on this ground.

Residential Amenity – Daylighting

Despite the 10.75m long extension extending to within 1m of the southern side boundary, a gap of around 4m is maintained between the side elevation of the extension and No.123 Grinstead Lane due to the existence of a driveway and parking bay between the two dwellings. As there is also no windows in the northern side elevation of No.123, the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact in terms of blocking access to daylight or overshadowing the adjacent dwelling.

Room Sizes

Whilst the room size requirements of Council's Development Standard No.4 – 'Flat Conversions' do not strictly apply to new build facilities, it is worth noting that only the upper floor flat (at $59m^2$) meets the $57m^2$ floor area standard for two bedroom flats, with the lower floor flat measuring only $48m^2$.

A number of the room sizes are also below the sizes prescribed in Council's Development Standard, such as the bedrooms of both flats (main bedroom $8.7m^2$ and $9.9m^2$ as opposed to $11m^2$ / 2nd bedroom $4.8m^2$ and $6.4m^2$ as opposed to $6.5m^2$), and the living room of the downstairs flat ($12.7m^2$ as opposed to $14m^2$).

Amenity Space

The $91m^2$ amenity area set aside for the existing dwelling is in excess of the $65m^2$ required for a three bed terrace dwelling (such is what the existing semi-

detached dwelling will become), as are the 49m^2 & 52m^2 amenity areas set aside for the flats which exceed the 20m^2 minimum required by Council's development standards.

The proposed division of the flat amenity space requires the occupants of the first floor flat to exit the building via the front door, then walk approximately 25m around the dwelling to the rear of the existing garden. Whilst less than ideal, the benefit of having their own individual garden is considered to out weigh any concern with its proximity to the parent dwelling.

Vehicular Access & Parking

The issues that do not appear resolvable are the traffic safety concerns raised by County Highways. It is agreed that further reversing movements at the site and the need for additional kerbside parking generated by the proposal immediately adjacent to the existing pedestrian crossing point would be detrimental to road safety, and as such the application should be refused on this basis. Such a decision would also be consistent with Council's refusal of the application for No.131 Grinstead Lane in November 2000 (L/147/00/TP), and No.133 in 1989 (L/42/89/TP) which were refused on highway grounds as well as being out of keeping with surrounding development and creation of precedent for similar proposals.

Recommendation

Refusal for the following reasons:-

1. 2AR
2. 7AR
3. 8R

Case Officer: ..... Date: 12/11/07